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TAGS: ENRG ETRD EFIN COMECON UR GE RO HU BU CZ PL

SUBJECT: SOVIET MINISTER DISCUSSES EAST EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION
IN CONSTRUCTION OF ORENBURG PIPELINE

REF: MOSCOW 13627, SEPT 7, 1974

1. SUMMARY: IZVESTIYA INTERVIEW WITH SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER
OF CONSTRUCTION OF PETROLEUM AND GAS INDUSTRY ENTERPRISES
GIVES SPECIFIC LOCATIONS OF SECTORS OF 1650-MILE ORENBURG GAS
PIPELINE WHICH WILL BE BUILT ON SOVIET TERRITORY BY EAST EUROPEAN

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CEMA COUNTRIES. LINE IS DESCRIBED AS LARGEST CEMA PROJECT IN
USSR, REQUIRING OVERALL LABOR FORCE OF 30,000 . SOVIETS

WILL WORK WITH BULGARIANS IN BUILDING LAST SECTOR ENDING AT CZECHOSLOVAK FRONTIER AND WILL ALSO "TAKE PART" IN CONSTRUCTION BEING DONE BY CZECHS, HUNGARIANS AND EAST GERMANS. SOME OF GAS FROM PROJECT WILL GO TO EUROPEAN PART OF USSR AS WELL AS TO EE COUNTRIES. TONE OF ARTICLE IMPLIES THAT PROJECT WILL BE EXTENSIVELY PUBLICIZED AS EXAMPLE OF "FRATERNAL SOCIALIST COOPERATION." END SUMMARY

2. FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE IN IZVESTIYA APRIL 25 PROVIDES NEW INFORMATION ON GAS PIPELINE WHICH WILL RUN 1650 MILES FROM ORENBURG IN SOUTHERN URALS TO SOVIET"-CZECHOSLOVAK FRONTIER AND WILL BE CONSTRUCTED AS MULTILATERAL PROJECT BY USSR AND SIX EE CEMA COUNTRIES. INFORMATION IS BASED ON IZVESTIYA INTERVIEW WITH A. SOROKIN, DEPUTY MINISTER OF USSR MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION OF PETROLEUM AND GAS INDUSTRY ENTERPRISES.

3. MAIN ITEMS SUPPLEMENTING INFORMATION REPORTED EARLIER FOLLOW:

A) PROJECT DESCRIBED AS "LARGEST OF CEMA PROJECTS" TAKING PLACE IN SOVIET UNION. TOTAL THROUGHPUT CAPACITY WILL BE 28 MILLION CUBIC METERS GAS PER YEAR WITH DELIVERIES GOING TO EUROPEAN SECTOR OF USSR ASWELL AS TO EASTERN EUROPE.

B) WHEN WORK FULLY UNDERWAY TOTAL LABOR FORCE WILL BE 30,000 MEN FROM USSR, BULGARIA, HUNGARY, GDR, POLAND, ROMANIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA. LINE EXPECTED TO BEGIN OPERATING DURING THIRD QUARTER OF 1978.

C) EACH EE COUNTRY WITH EXCEPTION OF ROMANIA WHICH, AS REPORTED EARLIER, WILL PROVIDE GAS PROCESSING (DESULPHURIZATION) EQUIPMENT TO BE USED AT ORENBURG, WILL CONSTRUCT AN APPROXIMATELY THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY MILE SECTOR. SOVIETS WILL WORK JOINTLY WITH BULGARIANS IN BUILDING BULGARIAN SECTOR AND WILL "TAKE PART" IN CONSTRUCTION CARRIED OUT BY CZECHOSLOVAKS, HUNGARIANS AND EAST GERMANS. POLES WILL APPARENTLY BE ONLY ONES TO GO IT ALONE.

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D) GEOGRAPHIC POINT-TO-POINT LOCATIONS OF SECTORS WILL BE: POLAND FROM ORENBURG TO ALEKSANDROV-GAY IN RSFSR JUST ACROSS FRONTIER FROM WESTERN KAZAKHSTAN; CZECHOSLOVAKIA FROM ALEKSANDROV-GAY TO SAKHRANOVKA IN ROSTOV OBLAST, RSFSR; HUNGARY FROM SAKHRANOVKA TO KREMENCHUN ON THE DNEPER RIVER IN THE UKRAINE; GDR FROM KREMENCHUG TO BAR, ABOUT 30 MILES WEST OF VINNITSA IN THE UKRAINE; AND BULGARIA FROM BAR TO A POINT ON CZECHOSLOVAK-SOVIET FRONTIER NEAR UZHGOROD.

E) ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE OF LINE WHEN IN FULL OPERATION WILL BE 75. TOTAL OF 22 COMPRESSOR STATIONS WILL BE INSTALLED.

F) BUILDERS WILL HAVE TO OVERCOME SOME MAJOR GEOGRAPHIC OBSTACLES WHICH WILL INCLUDE PUTTING LINE THROUGH THE VOLGOGRAD WATER RESERVOIR AT A DEPTH OF 30 METERS (CZECHS); CROSSING THE DNIEPER RIVER (HUNGARIANS AND EAST GERMANS); AND THE DNIESTER (BULGARIANS AND SOVIETS); 160 KILOMETERS OF SWAMP AND 350 KILOMETERS OF ROCKY TERRAIN (LOCATIONS NOT GIVEN).

G) FIVE REGIONAL DIRECTORATES WILL SUPERVISE WORK OF RESPECTIVE SECTIONS. THEY WILL BE LOCATED AT URALS, VOLGOGRAD, KHARKOV, CHERKASSY, AND IVANO-RANKO AND WILL BE MADE UP OF NATIONALS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN CONSTRUCTION. OVERALL, SUPREME DIRECTORATE FOR ENTIRE PROJECT WILL BE A NEW SOVIET-ALL-UNION ASSOCIATION NAMED "SOYUZINTERGASTROY."

H) ALL PREPARATIONS NOW COMPLETED FOR FIRST MEETINGS OF "FOREIGN" (EAST EUROPEAN) SPECIALISTS IN USSR. "ALL NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR WORK AND FOR LIVING QUARTERS" WILL BE PROVIDED FOR PERSONNEL WORKING ON PROJECT, WITH "LOCAL SOVIET AND PARTY ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING GREAT ASSISTANCE."

4. COMMENT: OVERALL TONE OF SOROKIN INTERVIEW PLUS WIND-UP WHICH STATES THAT PIPELINE WILL BE ANOTHER "BEAUTIFUL SYMBOL OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN FRATERNAL SOCIALIST STATES" INDICATES THAT PROJECT MAY SOON BE COMPETING WITH BAIKAL-AMUR RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN SIBERIA AS SUBJECT FOR ENTHUSIASTIC PUBLICITY IN SOVIET PRESS.

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5. THIS IS FIRST INDICATION EMBASSY HAS HAD THAT SOVIETS WILL BE ACTIVELY WORKING ON SOME PARTS OF ORENBURG LINE ALONG WITH EAST EUROPEANS, AND ALSO FIRST FIRM ANNOUNCEMENT THAT SOME OF GAS WILL GO TO EUROPEAN SECTOR OF USSR. EARLIER ARTICLES HAVE IMPLIED THAT ENTIRE PRODUCTION WOULD GO TO EASTERN EUROPE. NO MENTION IS MADE OF ROMANIAN CONTRIBUTION WHICH, ACCORDING TO REPORTS PUBLISHED LAST YEAR (REFTEL), WILL BE THROUGH HARD-CURRENCY PURCHASE OF FRENCH "SCRUBBING" EQUIPMENT TO REMOVE LARGE AMOUNTS OF SULPHUR PRESENT IN ORENBURG GAS CONDENSATE DEPOSITS. FINALLY, EMBASSY FINDS IT INTERESTING AND ALSO SOMEWHAT IRONIC, IN VIEW OF CURRENT SOVIET FUROR OVER ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR II VICTORY, THAT EAST GERMANS WILL BE WORKING ON 300-MILE STRETCH IN UKRAINE WHERE WEHRMACHT WAS ACTIVE IN 1942 AND 1943.

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